DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 103 824 CS 001 686

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TITLE An Investigation into the Effectiveness of Bibliotherapy on the Reader's Self-Reliance.
PUB DATE Apr 75
NOTE 5p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Washington, D.C., March 30-April 3, 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Behavior Development; *Bibliotherapy; Elementary Education; *Emotional Adjustment; Grade 6; Reading; *Reading Improvement; *Reading Research
IDENTIFIERS *Self Reliance

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of prescribed literature on the reader's self-reliance. The subjects were 36 sixth grade children from the ages of eleven to thirteen. Pretest and posttest measures of self-reliance were made by the California Test of Personality and the Teacher Rating Scale. The subjects were randomly assigned to one of three groups: bibliotherapy, recreational reading, or control. The bibliotherapy group was given prescribed literature intended to promote greater self-reliance. The recreational reading group had released time for recreational reading. The control group did not have either any prescribed literature or released time for recreational reading. The results indicated that there was no significant difference between the groups' self-reliance scores on the posttest measures. (WR)

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An Investigation into the Effectiveness of Bibliotherapy on the Reader's Self-Reliance

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The subjects used in the investigation were thirty-six sixth grade school children from the ages of eleven to thirteen. The number of subjects used in the investigation was determined by considering the power of the F-test in analysis of variance. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of prescribed literature on the reader's self-reliance. Pre and post-test measures of self-reliance were made by The California Test of Personality and The Teacher Rating Scale. The independent variables, I.Q. and Reading Grade Placement, were used as screening critera. Subjects were randomly placed into a three group design. The design consisted of an Experimental Group I- Bibliotherapy; An Experimental Group II- Recreational Reading; and Group III - A Control Group.

Experimental Group I was presented prescribed literature intended to promote greater self-reliance. Experimental Group II had released time for recreational reading without prescribed literature. Group III was the Control Group without prescribed literature or released time for recreational reading.

The twelve students comprising Experimental Group I - Bibliotherapy were presented books to promote greater self-reliance from Kircher's List and books written by the experimenter. The Experimental Group II - Recreational Reading Group had released time to

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read books of their choice, excluding those selected for Group I.

A reading center was prepared for the sessions in each school. Both groups met for forty-five minutes daily for four weeks. Two days were spent on interpretation skills with both of the experimental groups. There was no discussion of the stories in either group, thus reducing the chance of confounding by a projective effect. The Control Group did not participate in any of the above activities though they were a part of the pre-test and post-test plan.

Prior to any treatment each teacher was asked to rate the student's self-reliance. This measure formed the pre-test of The Teacher Rating Scale. After the treatment each teacher was asked to again rate the student's self-reliance. This measure formed the post-test of The Teacher Rating Scale.

Multivariate Analysis of Covariance was used to analyze the data. Three hypotheses were tested in the study. The results indicated that there were no significant differences among groups.

The general null hypothesis of no differences among the groups' self-reliance scores was accepted. Therefore, within the limits of this experiment it can be concluded that bibliotherapy may not be an effective tool in promoting greater self-reliance. This finding does not support the theoretical implication that bibliotherapy can help solve some developmental problems of adjustment and growth.

The second null hypothesis of no differences among groups on the reader's self-reliance as measured by The California Test of Personality was accepted. This would indicate that there was little

demonstrable effect from the Bibliotherapy treatment of promoting greater self-reliance.

The third hypothesis of no differences among groups on the reader's self-reliance as measured by The Teacher Rating Scale was accepted. The Bibliotherapy Group had a substantially higher mean adjusted post-test score and the MANACOVA results of this hypothesis approached significance (.05) and was found to be significant at the .07 level. This could indicate a need for further research and for different experimental designs.

The California Test of Personality's Interest Inventory was also given. A pertinent question on the inventory asked, "Do you like to read literature"? In the post-hoc analysis it was evident that some groups had a better attitude toward reading literature. Ten of the twelve subjects in the Control Group answered yes to the question, as compared to five in the Bibliotherapy Group and six in the Recreational Reading Group. This led the experimenter to pose the question: Are the frequencies of individuals in the two categories (yes and no) significantly different? Because the data were categorized into frequencies, a chi-square test was used for the analysis. The groups were found to be not equal, thereby indicating a possible confounding effect in the design, i.e., inspite of random assignment to experimental and control groups, there was a significant imbalance among the groups in terms of their liking to read. The California Test of Personality's Self-Reliance score's lack of reliability, as estimated by Guttman's Lamda III, may account for not finding significant differences among groups.

The major focus of research on bibliotherapy has been the adole-

scent or adult. Few investigations have been conducted on the elementary level, and those that have were impressionistic or used non-validated questionnaires, observations or interviews. At this point it is still questionable as to whether elementary level students benefit from bibliotherapy.